The Myrtle

"INSTEAD OF THE BRIER SHALL COME UP THE MYRTLE TREE." ISA. LV. 13

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For the Myrtle.

What Makes the Baby Grow.

CAN you tell me, do you know
What it is makes baby grow?

"Mother feeds it;" that is sure,
But what makes the baby grow?

Food, of course the baby needs;
Yet a mother's loving deeds,
Cannot change the food she feeds

Into muscle, blood and bone,
Any more than can a stone,
Take a nature not its own.

Curling hair and rosy toes,
Show each day the body grows.

And each baby has a way
Of its own, to grow, we say.

Some are short, and some are tall,
One is large, another small.

Some are plain and others fair.
Those who have of babies care,

Say they each can win a place,
In some heart by baby grace.

Can you tell me, do you know
What it is makes baby grow?

He who made the growing wheat,
Yield sweet food for us to eat,

Made the human body so,
That the little frame can grow,

Of itself with proper food;
Like the flowers in field and wood.

H. H. D.

ROUND as as apple, and deep as a cup—
This is a riddle for you to tell;
All the king's oxen couldn't draw it up—
I guess it's the old orchard well.

What is it that rides on the rope, little daughter?
And what does it do, do you think?
The old oaken bucket, carrying water,
For the dear little lambs to drink.

Little Sower.

For the Myrtle.

The Story of Mother Michel and her Cat.

FROM THE FRENCH.

CHAPTER VIII.

Mother Michel seeks for her cat.

SEVERAL days passed in painful expectation; but, like general Marlborough, Monmouth did not come back. The countess' grief was deep and true, although she made no show of it. She thought constantly of Monmouth's goodness and gentleness, and how much he loved her. No other pet had possessed so many brilliant qualities and no other had caused her so much sorrow. As she was very kind she did not blame mother Michel, but tried to comfort the poor woman all she could. She said to her one evening: "It was not your fault, mother Michel, you could not help it, therefore you ought not to give way to your sorrow, but to submit cheerfully to the decrees of heaven."

"I know it," replied mother Michel, "and, if I believe as you do, that Monmouth was dead, I would resign myself without murmuring; but I have an idea that he still lives; it seems to me that he is running about the streets, exposed to wicked treatment, to saucepans perhaps, by a multitude of wild—"

"Stop, you must not talk so, mother Michel; Monmouth is dead, if he were not he would have returned to us before this."

"Something tells me he is still living, and that if you wished to hear about him, you have only to go to see—"

"Whom shall I go to see?" interrupted the countess.

"Our neighbor, Mrs. Bradamore, a famous fortune-teller, who lives at the end of our street; she foretells the future, knows how to take off freckles, cures the toothache, and so forth.

"For shame, mother Michel! How can you, a sensible woman, place any confidence in the tricks of a fortune-teller!"

"But I am not the only one, my dear lady; some very wise people go to see her, and she is more learned and less dear in her charges, than most fortune-tellers; for twenty crowns she will show you an old witch called—"

"Stop, for pity's sake!" said the countess.

Mother Michel said no more, but the first leisure moment she had, she ran to the fortune-teller's. This woman lived in spacious rooms, very richly furnished, for she had made a great deal of money out of the silly people who come to visit her. Black velvet decorated with stars of tinsel paper, covered the walls of the room in which she received the people who came to have their fortune told. A square table stood in the centre of the room, and upon this were some obelisks of painted tin, some Leyden jars, some horns and various things of which the pretended fortune-teller did not even know the use.

She showed at first some embarrassment on seeing mother Michel; however, after having closed a glass door which opened into another room she came back to greet her and said in a solemn tone;

"What do you desire?"

"To ask you about the present, the past, and the future."

"I can tell you all you wish to know, but it will cost you three crowns."

"Here they are, I will give them to you with great pleasure."

Mrs. Bradamore, regretting that she had not charged more, took the money and began in this way;

"In what year, and on what day of the month were you born?"

"The 24th of May, 1698."

"What are the initials of your name and of the place where you were born?"

"A. R. M. N. L. S."

Mother Michel was a widow and her name was Anastasie Ravegot Michel, and she was born at Noisy-le-Sec.

"What is your favorite flower?"

"The Jerusalem-artichoke."

After these customary questions she took a cup and began to examine the coffee grounds in it; after a while she said, without looking away from the cup, "I see that you have lost a creature, who is very dear to you," then after looking awhile longer she said; "I see that this being is not a man, woman or child, it is a quadruped, a cat or a dog." Mother Michel started from her chair with surprise, and Mrs. Bradamore added, "I see it is a cat."

Mother Michel was more and more satisfied, and without giving her time to seat herself again, the fortune-teller put down the cup, took a pack of cards, shuffled them, cut them two or three times, and placed them in a regular order upon the table, then said gravely:

"Your cat is the knave of clubs, let us see what will happen to him; one, two, three, four; ten of clubs! he is running, he has a great love of travelling; he goes about in the night to see the wonders of Paris. One, two, three, four; the queen of spades. This is a lady who manufactures ermine for furriers from cat's skin. One, two, three, four; the knave of spades. This is a rag-picker. One, two, three, four; the king of spades. This is a doctor; now here they all come together; the woman, the rag-picker and the doctor, it frightened me! One, two, three, four; clubs! One, two, three, four; clubs again! One, two, three, four; still clubs! Your cat will bring in money to these three persons. The rag-picker wishes to kill him to sell his skin to the lady and his body to the doctor who will place his skeleton in his cabinet and use it when he wishes to lecture on the anatomy of cats. Will the cat get away from his persecution? One, two, three, four; seven of spades. It is a fact, madam, your cat no longer lives."

"They have killed him!" cried mother Michel, confounded at this revelation, and she seemed to hear a plaintive mewing which she imagined was Monmouth's last cry of agony; but it was not an illusion, a cat had been mewing and was mewing still in the next room. A square of the glass door was all at once broken by a bold stroke and Monmouth himself fell at mother Michel's feet. He had seen her from the top of the library in the next room, had called her again and again, and as she did not reply to him, in his despair, he had

thrown himself against the door with such force that it broke and thus he had fallen through.

"My cat has been with you!" said Mother Michel; "You have stolen him from us! but my mistress is powerful! my mistress is the countess, and she will punish you as you deserve!"

Having said these words, mother Michel with Monmouth under her arm prepared to go out, but Mrs. Bradamore stopped her and said: "Do not blame me, I pray you, I did not steal your cat."

"How happens it then that he is in your house?"

I took him of a little boy named Faribole; he gave me this cat which I had desired to have for a long time, and who by his wise face, I thought would make a good witch. This is the truth, the whole truth; I pray you, that your mistress will not disturb me."

"The countess will decide what to do, when she hears about it," replied mother Michel, and she disappeared with the cat; it seemed as if she made only one step from Mrs. Bradamore's house to the countess' mansion, and she did not stop until she reached the dining room where she arrived out of breath and unable to speak a word. She showed Monmouth to the countess, who uttered a cry of joy on seeing him.

Father Lustucru was present at this touching scene; on seeing Monmouth he was so much astonished, that his reason left him for a moment; he imagined that this cat so many times saved was a fantastic being, able to speak like the beasts in the fables, and he said aloud; "I am lost, Monmouth has come back again to punish me!" *M. C. Schouler.*

A Noble Answer.

As the missionaries were approaching the immense island of New Guinea, some one spoke of the unhealthiness of it, and the presence of alligators, serpents, centipedes, etc.

"Hold!" said one of the native Catechists, "are there men there?"

"O, yes," was the reply, "there are men, but they are such dreadful savages, that there is no use of your thinking of living among them."

"That will do," responded the native, "wherever there are men, missionaries are bound to go."

A noble reply, worthy of a discipline of Him who commands his followers to "go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature."

Little Kindnesses.

A little incident came under my observation, the other day, illustrating the power of confering happiness, which we all possess: showing that it is not great deeds that do the most good in the world, but the little acts of kindness that help make the great waste of life pleasant.

In our immediate neighborhood lives a maiden lady, quite advanced in years, who is wholly dependent upon her brothers for support. Although she has a pleasant home, and all that is necessary for bodily comfort, yet there are little things that she oftimes wishes for. Little Bessie is in the habit of going to see her daily: for one is as much of a child as the other. One day, on coming home from there, she said, "Mother, Aunt Lottie has been showing me her things,"—little pictures, bits of print and the like, that had been given her, from time to time—"and I want to give her my green box, for she has nothing but an old one, tied together with strings. May I not? I don't suppose she has many that love her much." So the box was given, and the poor old lady was as pleased as a child with a new toy; repeating over and over again—"I never expected to have a box as nice as this." Even a little child can make some poor, weary heart glad. There are so many in all places who, as Bessie says, "have not many to love them much," that need a kind word of sympathy, or some little token to gladden their lives; and yet we withhold just such little, trifling kindnesses, which would brighten many a sunless life. If we could only think of them as little Bessie did, remembering always that—

Kind words cost us nothing.
Yet make worn hearts so glad,
Flow ever, from the loving lips,
And brighten the homes sad.

Bring cheer to the lonely hearted,
Whose way through life seems drear;
And calls back, from forbidden paths,
The loved who've wandered there.

When dealing with the erring ones,
Why should hard words be spoken?
Christ taught that we should them forgive,
If we would be forgiven.

And little deeds in kindnss wrought,
Bring many an answering token
Of love, for the ice of time o'er many a heart,
By kind deeds alone, is broken.

THE best way to drive bad thoughts from the mind is to let good ones in.

Learning to Read.

A STANDS for angels; far above
The earth they watch us now;
Perhaps their waving pinions move
The curls upon your brow,
B stands for blue, the color, dear,
Of heaven, and of your eyes so clear.

"C stands for curls upon your head,
D is for dimples deep;
E, for your ear so soft and red,
F for your little feet.
G is the gold that tints your hair,
H is your hand so small and fair.

"I is for pretty Isabel,
J is for John and Jim;
K is for Karl, you know him well,
You often speak to him;
L is for love, from God it came:
M is for mother, sweetest name!"

And thus the tender voice goes on
Through all the alphabet
She names the letters, one by one,
And lest the child forget,
She names with each some simple word
By her young pupil often heard.

And often as she speaks, she bends
To kiss the forehead fair,
Or wind about her gentle hand
The soft and shining hair,
Or whisper in the pearly ear,
With tender look, "I love you, dear."

Amelia E. Daley.

—o-O-o—

Seventy Pairs of Hands.

The variety and number of needles made in these days are wonderful; the surgeon, tailor, harness-maker, book-binder, felt-worker, saddler, glover, embroiderer, and housewife, each wanting needles of all shapes and sizes and lengths. And when you think that each needle has to pass through seventy pairs of hands before it is finished and ready for use, you see what pains is taken to reach excellence in a very small thing.

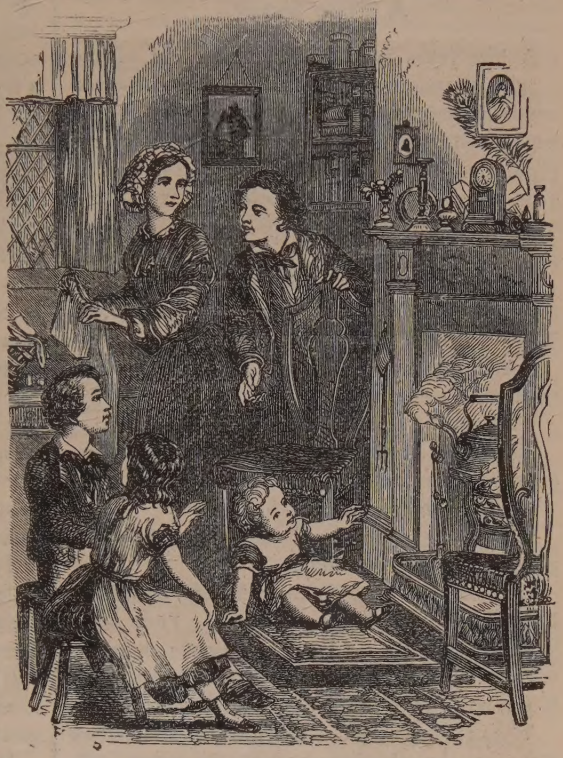
Seventy pairs of hands to make a needle! and each pair necessary to make the needle perfect. If only one pair refused to do their part the whole would be a failure—not a needle would be right.

You see, it is painstaking in little things and in small parts which leads to excellence and success. We are apt to slight bits of work, thinking it is no matter and of no account. But it is not so. The details of a plan must be faithfully carried out in order to make the plan a success. If the parts of a work are all well done, the whole will be complete, and only then.

And it is just so in making and molding character. It must be well done in parts, faithfully finished in bits, in order to make a complete and beautiful whole.

Always be sure that all the small and common work which you have to do is thoroughly done. It is faithfulness in little things which makes you reliable in great things.

AN obstinate man does not hold opinions, but they hold him.



A Window Picture.

OH! brother, please come to the window and see,
The people out here in our yard getting tea;
The table is spread, and a lamp lighted there;
And near by the table sits each person's chair.

Now it looks like a room and the lamp lights it all;
I can even see pictures hung up on the wall;
And now a door opens; why, that man I know!
'Tis papa! all sprinkled with white flakes of snow.

A grate out of doors; do tell what it means;
He goes to the fire; how funny it seems!
It looks like you, mother, and baby, and me,
Out there in the garden, just ready for tea.

Come look in the mirror; you see pictured there,
The things in this room; each person, each chair;
The grate, and the lamp, and the table all spread,
And baby Will, nodding his dear little head.

Just think, foolish sister, that each window-pane,
Reflects like a mirror, and that will explain,
How the brightness within, and the darkness without,
Like magic has brought this tea-party about.

H. H. D.

THERE is nothing purer than honesty, nothing sweeter than charity, nothing warmer than love, nothing brighter than virtue and nothing more steadfast than faith. These, united in one mind, form the purest, the sweetest, the richest, the brightest, and most steadfast happiness.

A True Story.

A few years ago, the superintendent of the "Little Wanderer's home," in Boston, received one morning a request from the judge that he would come up to the court-house. He complied, and found there a group of seven little girls,—ragged, dirty, and forlorn, peyond what even he was accustomed to see. The judge said,—

"Mr. T——, can you take any of them?"

"Certainly; I can take them all," was Mr. T——'s prompt reply.

"All! What in the world can you do with them all?"

"I'll make women of them,"

The judge singled out one, even worse in appearance than the rest, and asked again,—

"What can you do with that one?"

"I'll make a woman of her," Mr. T——replied, firmly and hopefully.

He took them (the seven friendless, homeless, hungry children) home with him. They were washed, combed, and tidily dressed; supplied with good suppers and comfortable beds,—the latter, no doubt, for the first time in their lives!

The next morning, after a good breakfast, they went into the school-room with the other children. During the forenoon, the teacher said to Mr. T——, in reference to Mary, the little girl whose chance for better things the judge thought so small,—

"I never saw a child like that. I have tried for an hour to get a smile, and I have failed."

The gentleman afterwards said to himself that her face was the saddest he had ever seen. Yet she was a very little girl, only five or six years old.

After school, he called her into his office, and said, pleasantly,—

"Mary, I used to have a little girl that would wait on me, and sit on my knee, and I loved her very dearly. But she doesn't live here now. A kind lady and gentleman adopted her. I miss her, and I would like to have you take her place, and be my little pet. Will you?"

A gleam of light came over the poor child's face, and she began to understand him. He gave her ten cents, and told her to go to a store near by, and get some candy. While she was out, he tried to think of something which would be easy for her little hands, and yet show her that he valued her aid. He looked around his office; it was already quite tidy, and he took some old newspapers, tore them in strips, and scattered them on the floor. When she returned a few moments afterwards, he said,—

"Mary, will you clear up my office a little for me,—pick up those papers, and make it look nice?"

She went to work with a will. A little more of this sort of management—just treating her as a kind father would—wrought the desired result. She went into the school-room after dinner with so changed a look and bearing that the teacher was astonished. The child's face was absolutely radiant; and half fearful of mental wandering, the lady went to her, and asked,—

"Mary, what is it? What makes you look so happy?"

"Oh, I've got somebody to love me!" the child answered, earnestly, as if that were heaven come down to earth.

That was all the secret. For want of love that little one's life had been so cold and desolate that she had lost childhood's beautiful faith and hope. She could not at first realize that kindness or joy was for her. It was the certainty that some one loved her, and desired her affection, that so lighted the child's soul, and gloriñed her face.

Mary has since been adopted by wealthy people, and now lives in a beautiful country home; but more than all its beauty and comfort, running like a golden thread through it all, she still finds love—that of her adopted father and mother.

Let us, dear children, who have many to love and be loved by, remember the richness of this blessing, and be kind to the dear ones our Father has given us, kind in act and word. And let us hold in affection and pity the many children whose need is like little Mary's; and, as we are able, work earnestly and cheerfully, and give generously to help them.

Smoked to Death.

A youth of sixteen fell dead with a cigar in his mouth. What caused his death? The coronor's inquest said, "It was a mysterious act of God." The minister at the funeral consoled the friends by saying much the same thing. Physicians said it was "heart-disease," and said nothing about the cause of his disease. A sensible woman, knowing the boy's habits, said, "Tobacco killed him." It deranged the action of the heart: it ceased to beat, and the victim fell. The woman was right.

Mrs. Somerville and her Pets.

I have been reading the life of a noble English lady, Mrs. Somerville, the famous scholar and author, who died last year at the extreme old age of ninety-two years. The story is all the more interesting because it was written by herself in her old age, and her words are as artless as a child's. I was especially pleased by her love for animals, it was such a witness of her kind and gentle heart. The more she learned of the works of God, the more she learned to love all things that he had made

When she was a child, little Mary Fairfax, running about the fields in Scotland, she showed this interest in all living things. Shell and flowers were her delight, and she spent a great deal of time in her father's beautiful flower-garden. But her love of birds and animals was even more intense. She remembered to her old age the goldfinches, beautiful birds that came in great flocks to feed on the grass-plot before the door when she was a child. And she was amused at thought of the tame geese that would try to fly off with the wild ones when they went by overhead.

They had a dog, a beautiful pointer named Hero, who staid for the most part in the garden, but being afraid of thunderstorms, would rush into the house and remain during the whole storm with his head on her knee. At seven or eight years old she found great pleasure in feeding the poultry and looking after the dairy and the cows.

"I never cried for dolls," she said, "and had no one to play with me. But I amused myself in the garden, which was much frequented by birds. I knew most of them, their flight and their habits. The swallows were never prevented from building above our windows, and when about to migrate, they used to assemble in hundreds on the roof of our house, and prepare for their journey by short flights. We fed the birds when the ground was covered with snow, and opened our windows at breakfast-time to let in the robins, who would hop on the table to pick up crumbs. The quantity of singing was very great; farmers and gardener's were less cruel and avaricious than now. They allowed our pretty songsters to share in the bounties of providence."

When she came home from school at eleven years old she says she was like an animal let out of a cage. "I was no longer amused in the garden, but wandered about the country. When the tide was out I spent hours on the sands, looking at the starfish and the sea-urchins, or watching the children digging for sand-eels, cockles, or the spouting razor-fish. I made a collection of shells. I knew the eggs of many birds, and made a collection of them. I never robbed a nest, but bought strings of eggs which were sold by boys, besides getting sea-fowl's eggs from sailors who had been in whalers or on other northern voyages. I also watched the crabs, live shells, jelly-fish and various marine animals, all of which were objects of curiosity and amusement to me in my lonely life. A little stream ran into the sea and in it were fresh-water mussels that often contained pearls, but I did not like to kill the creatures to get the pearls."

When she was a little older she went on a tour through Scotland with her father and mother. She says "I was a great admirer of Ossian's poems, and viewed the grand and beautiful scenery with awe; and my father, who was of a romantic disposition, smiled at my enthusiastic admiration of the eagles, as they soared above the mountains."

"On coming home from this journey," she writes, "I was quite heart-broken to find my beautiful gold-finch, which used to draw its water so prettily with an ivory cup and little chain, dead in its cage. The odious wretches of servants to whose care I trusted it, let it die of hunger. My heart is deeply pained as I write this, seventy years afterwards."

It was this little girl who became the great scholar, known over all the world. But she kept the same warm heart for all the little creatures of God. Seventy years afterwards, when she was a gentle old lady, and used to write her books reclining on her couch, she had a pet sparrow that would sit on her hand while she wrote. She writes tenderly of this companion when it dies, "I am left solitary; for I have lost my little bird who was my constant companion for eight years. It had both memory and intelligence, and such confidence in me as to sleep upon my arm while I was writing. My daughter to whom it was much attached, coming into my room early, was astonished at its not flying to meet her, as it generally did, and at last after a long search the poor little creature was found drowned."

She was very indignant with physicians and others who torture animals with their experiments, and with people who kill them to gratify a whim. She says "Many women without remorse allow the life of a pretty bird to be extinguished, in order that they may deck themselves with its corpse."

In her last years in Italy she made great exertions to have a law passed to prevent cruelty to animals; and gave her name to petitions for that purpose. She spoke indignantly of an Italian prince, who said to a man who was taking care of his old horse, "How can you care what becomes of an animal when he is no longer of use?" But she adds, "we English cannot boast of humanity as long as our sportsmen find pleasure in shooting down tame pigeons as they fly terrified out of a cage."

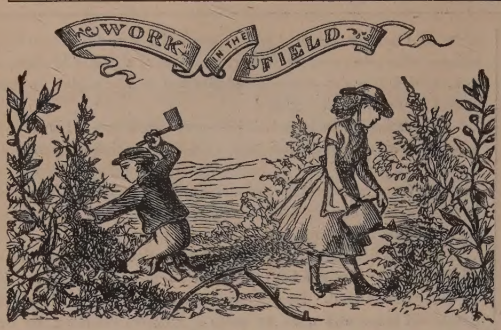
Again she writes, "We crossed over in a steamer with our servants and our pet birds, for I have now a beautiful long-tailed parroquet called Smeraldo, who is my constant companion and is very familiar. And here I must mention how much I was pleased to hear that Mr. Herbert has brought in a bill to protect land birds, which has been passed in Parliament. But I am grieved to find that "the lark which at heaven's gate sings," is thought unworthy of man's protection. Among the numerous plans for the education of the young let us hope that mercy may be taught as a part of religion."

She says again of her pets, "We are fond of birds and have several, all very tame. Our tame nightingales sing very beautifully, but, strange to say, not at night. We have also some solitary sparrows which are in fact a variety of the thrush, and some birds which we secured from destruction in the spring, when caught and ill-used by boys in the streets; besides, we have our dogs; all of which afford me amusement and interest."

Her gentle heart dares to hope that animals will live on after this life. When she comes to write of dying she says, "I shall regret the sky, the sea, with all their changes of beautiful coloring; the earth with its verdure and flowers, but far more shall I grieve to leave animals who have followed our steps affectionately for years, without knowing for a certainty their ultimate fate; though I firmly believe that the living principle is never extinguished." She who loved her dumb companions so well here, longed to have them with her again hereafter.

H. A. B.

—Our friends of the Columbus Avenue Church Sunday School of Boston, held in their vestry a fair and festival, Monday Feb. 23d, afternoon and evening, and thereby put a handsome sum into their treasury.



Lives of the Apostles.

LESSON XLVI.—PAUL.

NOTE. In his address to the mob from the castle stairs, St. Paul endeavors to show them that they were acting just as he once acted.

Question. — What peculiarity in St. Paul's language induced the mob to listen to him?

Answer. — Acts xxii. 2.

Q. — Where did he tell them, he received his religious education?

A. — Acts xxii. 3.

Q. — Of what was he as zealous as they were?

A. — Acts xxii. 3.

NOTE. They had charged St. Paul with violating the law; and he proceeds to show them that he was trained by the greatest expounder and the strictest observer of the law.

Q. — What had he done to believers in Christ similiar to what they were now doing to him?

A. — Acts xxii. 4.

Q. — What proof does he bring of the correctness of his statement?

A. — Acts xxii. 5.

NOTE. As these events occurred in Jerusalem and vicinity, it might seem to us that his hearers were so well acquainted with them, that St. Paul need not have referred to them. But we must remember that twenty years had passed since they occurred, and therefore comparatively only a few who heard him now, were then living in Jerusalem; and also that a great multitude of strangers were now gathered in Jerusalem from distant nations, to observe the Passover.

Q. — What experience of his life does St. Paul now relate to the people?

A. — Acts xxii. 6-11.

Q. — Who received him at Damascus?

A. — Acts xxii. 12.

Q. — What was the character of Ananias?

A. — Acts xxii. 12.

Q. — What did Ananias declare to St. Paul?

A. — Acts xxii 14.

Q. — To how many was he to be a witness of Christian truth?

A. — Acts xxii. 15.

Q. — After he had received baptism, to what place did St. Paul go?

A. — Acts xxii. 17.

Q. — Why did he not remain in Jerusalem?

A. — Acts xxii. 18.

Q. — Why did Paul believe that they would listen to him in Jerusalem?

A. — Acts xxii. 19, 20.

Q. — What reply came to him from heaven?

A. — Acts xxii. 21.

Q. — At the sound of what word, did the mob make an uproar?

A. — Acts xxii. 22.

NOTE. They would not hear that God loved the Gentiles and therefore they made an uproar that drowned St. Paul's voice.

Q. — How excited did they become?

A. — Acts xxii. 22, 23.

Hidden Seed

Enigma.

MY first, the place where Joseph lived,
Who loved the Lord;
And who, 'tis said, the body begged,
And buried in my third.

My seecond once to Jesus came
By night;
Assisted also to perform
The last sad, solemn rite.

My fourth, the time the Marys came,
My fifth, to see,
And by my whole were told he'd gone
Before to Galilee.

Answer.

FEB. 28. Lois, Ornau, Vashti, Enoch, Obadiah, Nimrod, Egypt, Aaron, Nicodemus, Olivet, Tarsus, Hamutal, Elijah, Rome. *Love One Another.*

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